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# 20 FRONTLINE DEADLINE

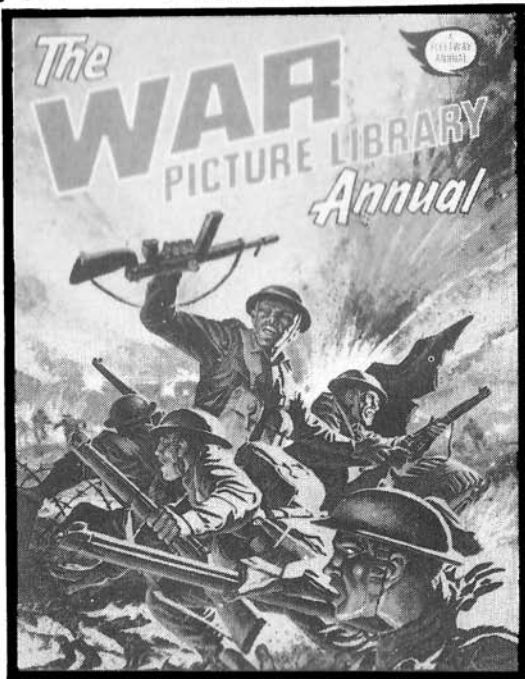


**IT'S HERE!**  
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# FRONTLINE DEADLINE



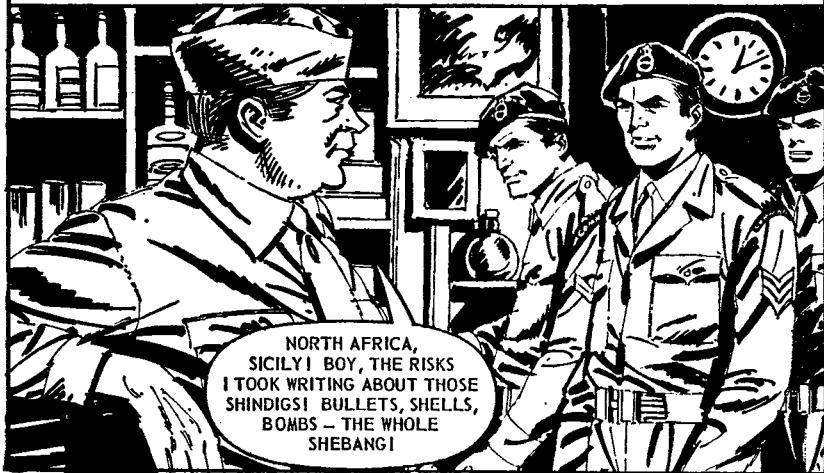
IN BOOKS AND FILMS, THE AMERICAN JOURNALIST IS PICTURED AS A FAST-TALKING "FIREBALL" WHO WILL NOT TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER IF HE IS ON THE HUNT FOR A STORY. CHUCK BEAUMONT, WAR CORRESPONDENT, WAS EXACTLY LIKE THAT...



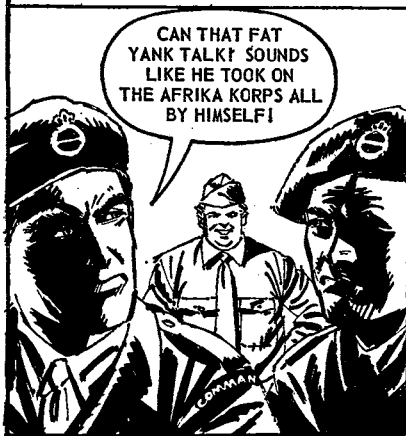
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## Chapter 1. LINE-SHOOTER

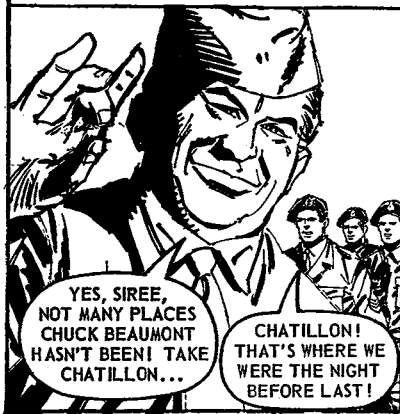
IN 1944, INVASION TALK WAS IN THE AIR. BUT IN A CERTAIN ENGLISH PUBLIC HOUSE, THE BRITISH COMMANDOS THERE COULD HARDLY GET A WORD IN EDGEWAYS...



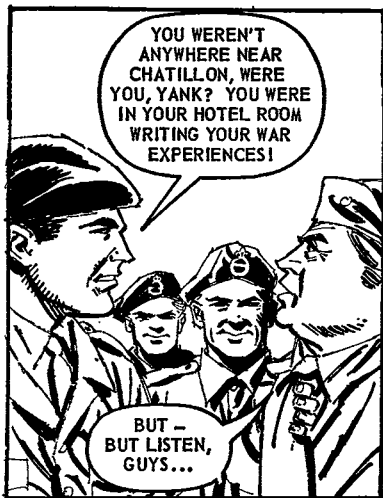
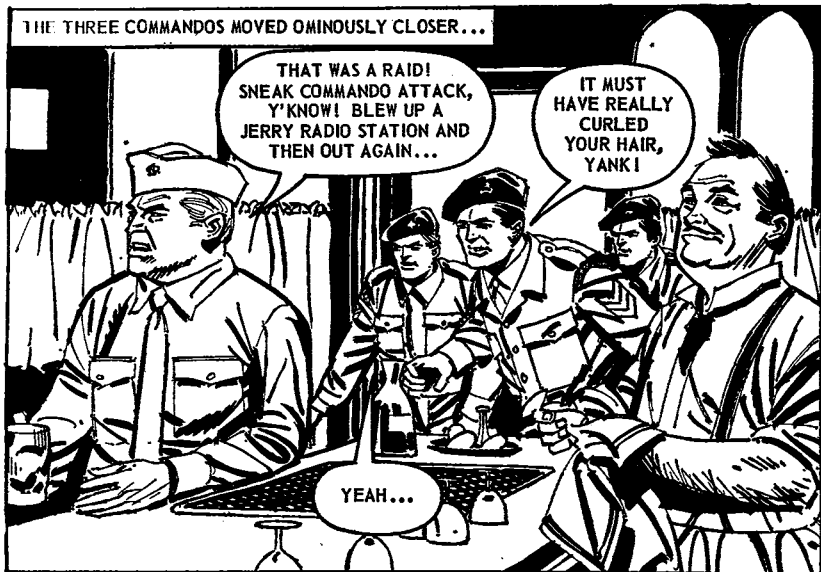
SERGEANT BERT TYLER SCOWLED DARKLY...



CHUCK BEAUMONT DID NOT APPEAR TO HEAR THE COMMANDO'S REMARKS.



THE THREE COMMANDOS MOVED OMINOUSLY CLOSER...



CHUCK BEAUMONT WAS TONGUE-TIED FOR ONLY A MOMENT ...



SURE, I ADMIT  
I WASN'T THERE IN  
PERSON! BUT MY FIGHTING  
SPIRIT WENT RIGHT  
ALONG TO CHATILLON  
WITH YOU!

FIGHTING  
SPIRIT?

SERGEANT TYLER TOOK HIS TWO MATES ASIDE.



IT'S TIME  
SOMEBODY TOOK  
THAT FAT YANK DOWN A  
PEG OR TWO! PUT HIM  
IN A REAL SCRAP AND  
HE'D WILT LIKE A  
DAISY!

ARE YOU  
KIDDING, SARGE,  
HE WOULDN'T  
GET NEAR A REAL  
SCRAP ...

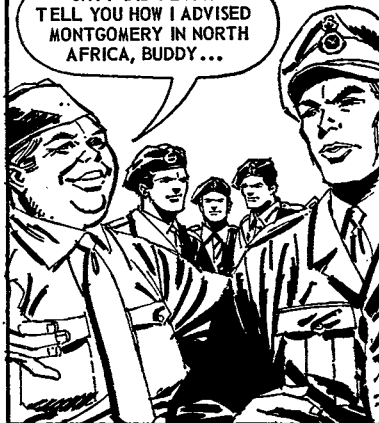
BERT TYLER'S EYES SUDDENLY SHONE WITH GRIM HUMOUR.

NOT IF  
HE COULD HELP  
IT, SMUDGER! BUT  
PERHAPS WE CAN DO  
SOMETHING ABOUT  
THAT!



BY THIS TIME, THE AMERICAN HAD BUTTONHOLED ANOTHER UNWARY LISTENER...

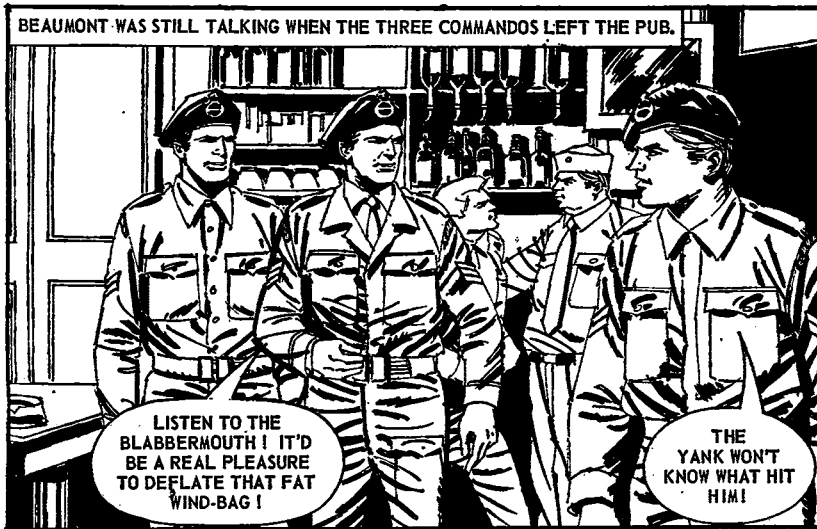
SAY! DID I EVER  
TELL YOU HOW I ADVISED  
MONTGOMERY IN NORTH  
AFRICA, BUDDY...



BEAUMONT WAS STILL TALKING WHEN THE THREE COMMANDOS LEFT THE PUB.

LISTEN TO THE  
BLABBERMOUTH! IT'D  
BE A REAL PLEASURE  
TO DEFLATE THAT FAT  
WIND-BAG!

THE  
YANK WON'T  
KNOW WHAT HIT  
HIM!



SERGEANT TYLER USED UP ONE DAY OF HIS PRECIOUS LEAVE TO SEE HIS BROTHER ...  
LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER JACK TYLER, R.N.



LT-COMMANDER TYLER RUBBED HIS CHIN THOUGHTFULLY.



THE TWO BROTHERS SHOOK HANDS.



SOON, BERT TYLER AND CORPORALS SMITH AND JONES WATCHED A SCENE ENACTED IN THEIR LOCAL PUB ...



BEAUMONT'S CHEST SWELLED UNTIL HIS SHIRT BUTTONS NEARLY POPPED!

NORTH AFRICA - SICILY - YOU NAME A BATTLE AND I'VE BEEN THERE! IN PERSON!



BEAUMONT BEAMED.

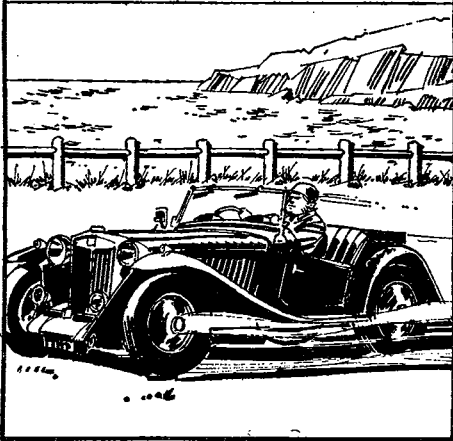
ANYTHING, ADMIRAL, ANY DARNED THING AT ALL!



LT-COMMANDER TYLER SPOKE LOUDLY ENOUGH FOR THE THREE COMMANDOS TO HEAR ...



DAYS LATER, CHUCK BEAUMONT'S LITTLE CAR SPED DOWN THE COAST TO KEEP HIS APPOINTMENT WITH THE BRITISH NAVY.



IT WAS AFTER DARK WHEN HE REACHED THE LANDING CRAFT COMMANDED BY  
I.T.-COMMANDER TYLER...



BEAUMONT STARTED TO PROTEST, AND THEN...



BEAUMONT WAS BUNDLED BELOW DECKS.

HEY!

AND DON'T  
WORRY IF YOU  
HEAR THE ENGINES  
START UP! IT MEANS  
WE'RE OFF TO THAT  
PARTY YOU WERE  
PROMISED!

LC1-7 WAS SOON PLOUGHING OUT TO SEA, WITH A FULL COMPLEMENT OF COMMANDOS ABOARD.

I THINK  
YOU CAN UNTIE  
OUR GUEST NOW,  
BERT!

LC1-7

SERGEANT TYLER WENT BELOW, EXPECTING TO FIND CHUCK BEAUMONT A QUIVERING BUNDLE OF FEAR. BUT...



HII  
I WAS  
WONDERING  
WHEN YOU'D  
COME!

HOW THE  
BLAZES DID  
YOU GET UNTIED,  
BEAUMONT?

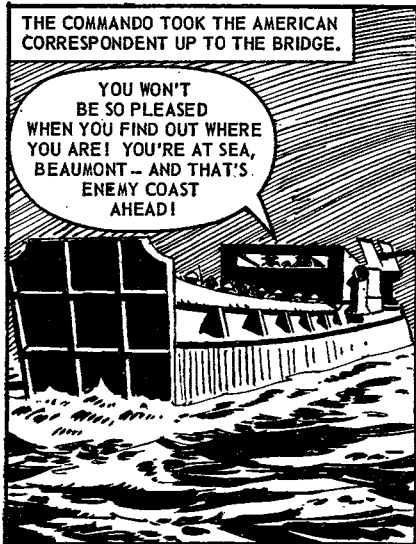
CHUCK BEAUMONT GRINNED.

JUST A LITTLE  
TRICK I LEARNED  
WHEN I WAS WRITING  
ABOUT TEXAS COWBOYS  
A COUPLA YEARS  
BACK!



THE COMMANDO TOOK THE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT UP TO THE BRIDGE.

YOU WON'T  
BE SO PLEASED  
WHEN YOU FIND OUT WHERE  
YOU ARE! YOU'RE AT SEA,  
BEAUMONT - AND THAT'S  
ENEMY COAST  
AHEAD!



BUT CHUCK BEAUMONT'S REACTION WAS UNEXPECTED TO SAY THE LEAST...



## Chapter 2. FOREST OF FIRE

IT WAS D-DAY, 6th JUNE. THE BRITISH COMMANDOS' DESTINATION WAS A SECTOR WELL TO THE FLANK OF THE MAIN INVASION BEACHES.



SERGEANT TYLER THREW A GLANCE OVER HIS SHOULDER. CHUCK BEAUMONT WAS STILL WITH THEM!



BUT THE COMMANDOS THEMSELVES WERE NOT GETTING FAR. THEN TYLER TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE FIGHT.

WE'VE GOT TO KNOCK OUT THAT M.G. WE CAN'T GET OFF THE BEACH TILL WE DO!



A COMMANDO SUDDENLY ROSE FROM COVER, A GRENADE IN HIS FIST.



BLITZEN!  
KILL THE  
SCHWEINI

BUT THE GRENADE WAS THROWN – A SMOKE GRENADE THAT WOULD CURTAIN OFF THE ATTACKERS\*FOR A FEW VITAL MOMENTS...



TYLER REACHED THE ROOF OF THE PILLBOX...





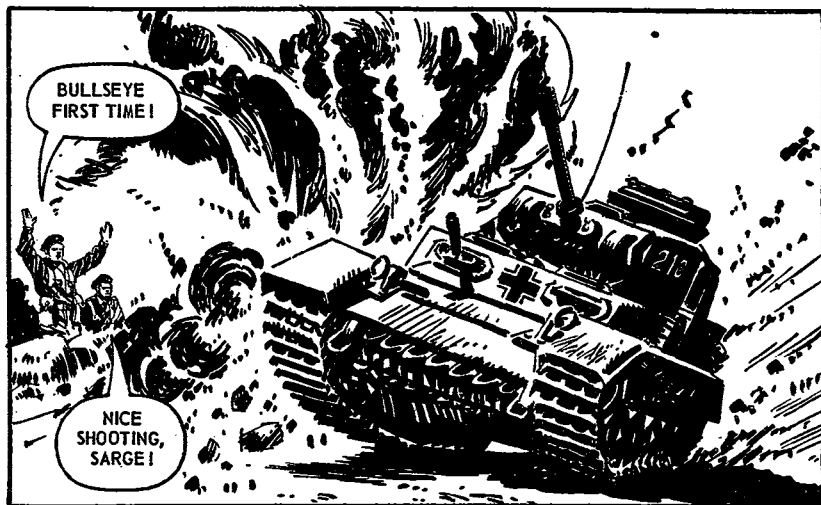
AS THE COMMANDOS MOVED OFF THE BEACH INTO THE TOWN, SERGEANT TYLER REMEMBERED THE AMERICAN...







TYLER TOOK THE PIAT HIMSELF, WHILE  
CORPORAL SMITH LOADED ITS DEADLY  
PROJECTILE.

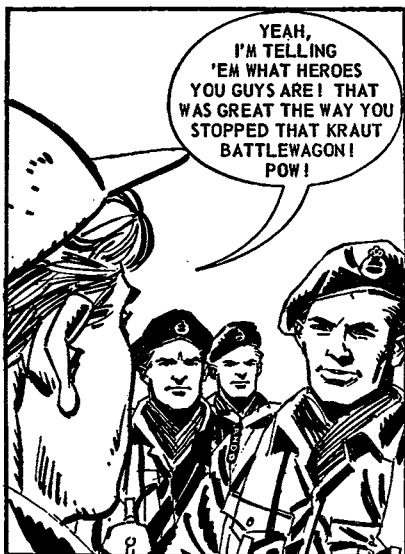


WITH THE DEATH OF THE LIEUTENANT AVENGED, SERGEANT TYLER LOOKED AROUND FOR CHUCK BEAUMONT.



BUT WHEN THE BRITISH COMMANDOS APPROACHED...

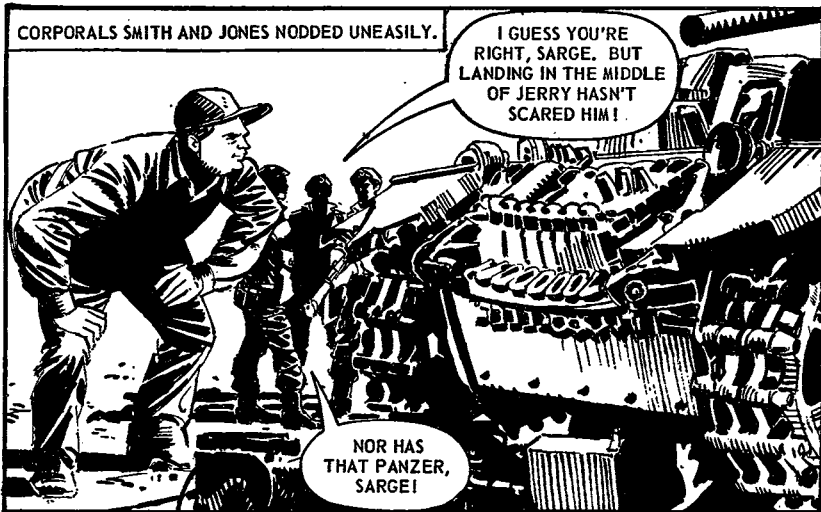


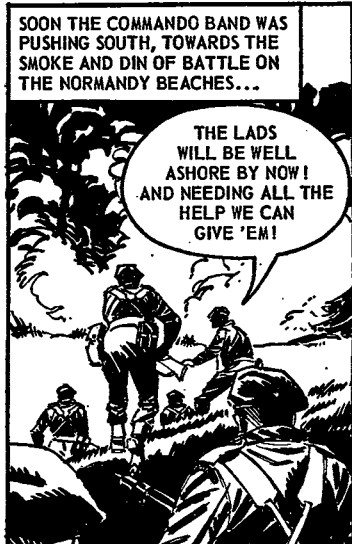


SERGEANT TYLER EDGED AWAY ...



CORPORALS SMITH AND JONES NODDED UNEASILY.





AS THE COMMANDOS MARCHED THROUGH ENEMY-INFESTED COUNTRYSIDE, SERGEANT TYLER PUZZLED OVER THE ENIGMA OF CHUCK BEAUMONT...



THE MURDEROUS CLATTER OF A SCHMEISSER RIPPED THE AIR...



AS TYLER DROPPED BEHIND A HORSE TROUGH HIS EYES WIDENED IN ASTONISHMENT...



THE AMERICAN MOVED SURPRISINGLY FAST FOR A MAN OF HIS SIZE...



BULLETS SCORCHED THE AIR ALL ABOUT HIM...



THE GERMAN WITH THE SCHMEISSER WAS EXPERTLY DEALT WITH – AND THEN SERGEANT TYLER AND HIS MEN MOVED IN.



THERE WAS A BRIEF BLAZE OF WEAPONS INSIDE THE FARMHOUSE – BUT ONE NAZI SOUGHT TO ESCAPE THE COMMANDO NET.



THE ESCAPING GERMAN CAME TO HIS FEET RIGHT IN THE PATH OF THE AMERICAN CORRESPONDENT ...

OUT OF MY WAY OR DIE, SCHWEINHUND!

SURE, BUDDY, I DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE...



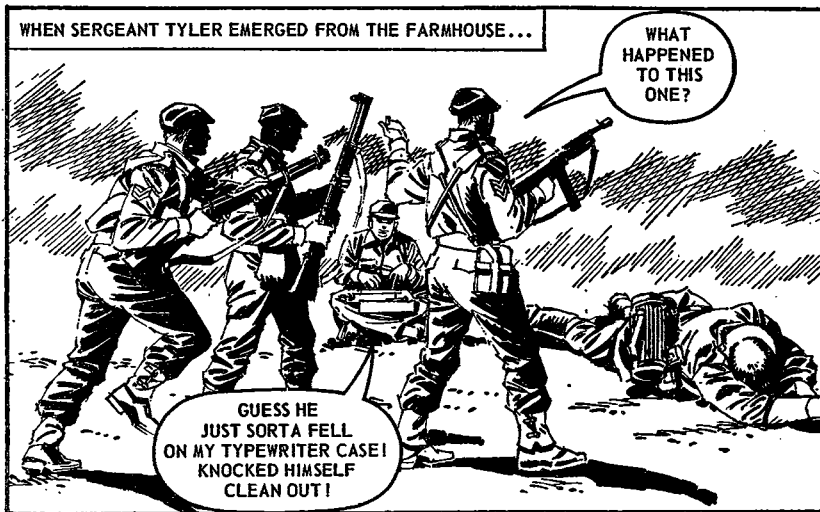
... FROM YOU!



WHEN SERGEANT TYLER EMERGED FROM THE FARMHOUSE...

WHAT HAPPENED TO THIS ONE?

GUESS HE JUST SORTA FELL ON MY TYPEWRITER CASE! KNOCKED HIMSELF CLEAN OUT!



TYLER'S EYES NARROWED.

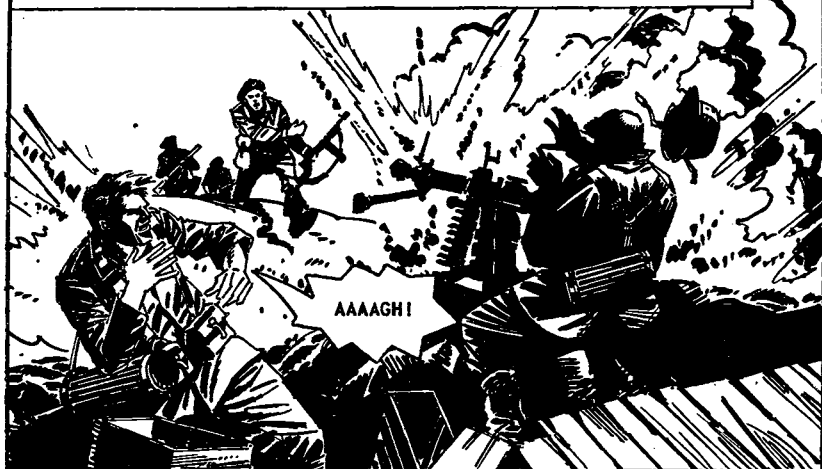
IS  
THIS YANK  
MAKING A FOOL  
OF ME?



THE ADVANCE WENT ON - INTO WOODED COUNTRY.



TWO SWIFTLY THROWN GRENADES PLUMMETED ON TO THE ENEMY MACHINE GUN NEST.



BUT FIFTY YARDS FARTHER ON...

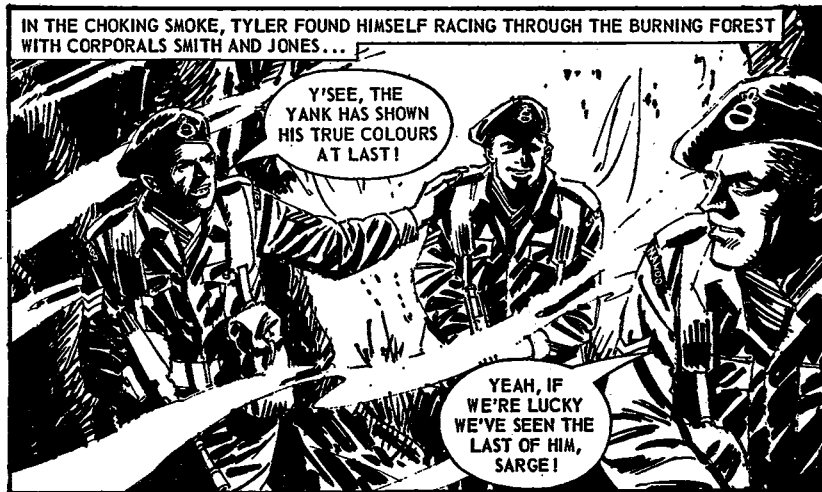


STEPPING MORE CAREFULLY NOW, THEY PENETRATED DEEPER INTO THE FOREST.

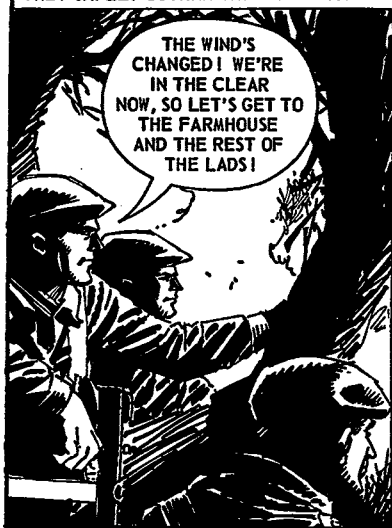


SUDDENLY...





THEY SAFELY OUTRAN THE FLAMES...



BUT AS THEY WENT, THE THREE COMMANDOS HEARD A FAMILIAR TAPPING SOUND.



SERGEANT TYLER SCOWLED.



SERGEANT TYLER SHOOK HIS HEAD.

LORD  
KNOWS WHAT  
THAT BLABBERMOUSE  
WOULD SPILL TO  
JERRY IF WE LEFT  
HIM BEHIND!  
C'M'ON...



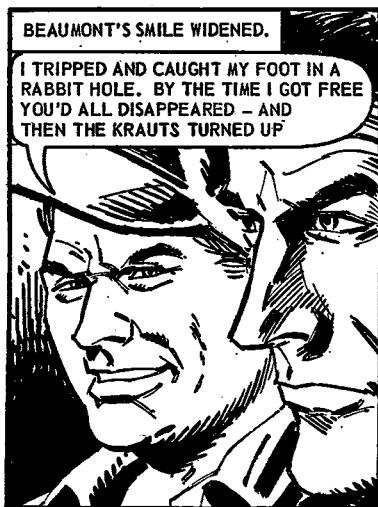
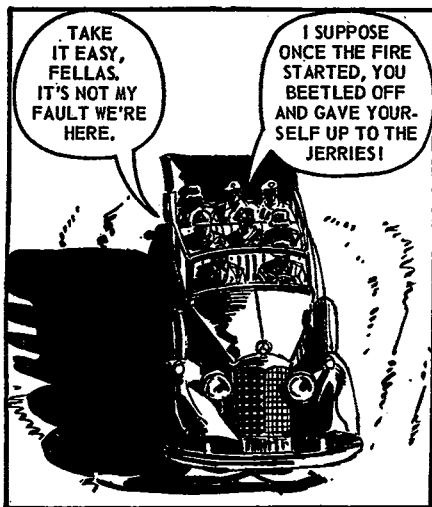
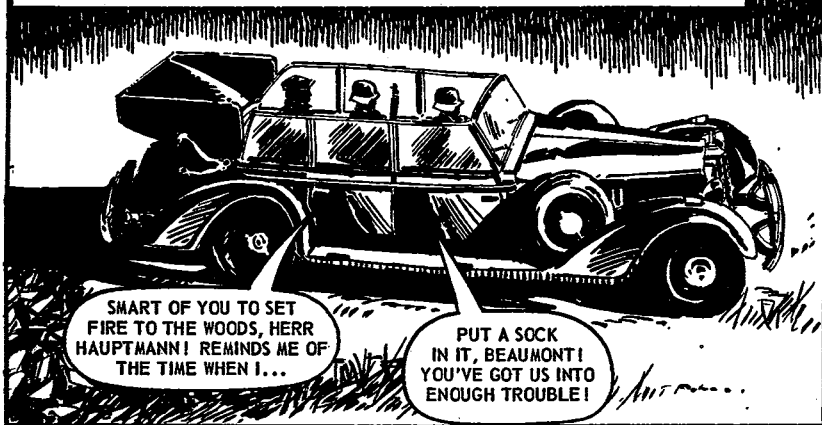
BUT SUDDENLY...

HÄNDE HOCH,  
ENGLANDERS!  
YOU ARE MY  
PRISONERS!



## Chapter 3. TRUE COLOURS

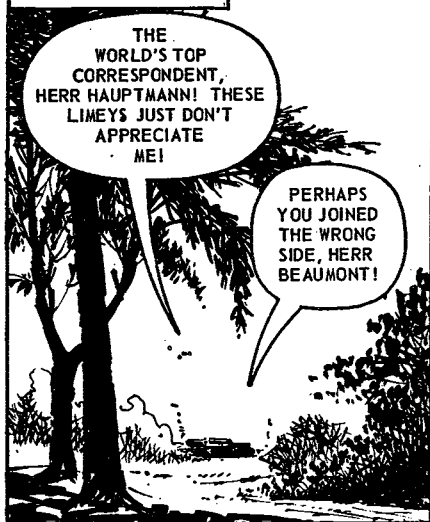
BEFORE LONG, THE THREE COMMANDOS AND CHUCK BEAUMONT WERE BEING DRIVEN EASTWARD AT HIGH SPEED THROUGH THE BURNED OUT FOREST ...



BEAUMONT SHRUGGED.

THE  
WORLD'S TOP  
CORRESPONDENT,  
HERR HAUPTMANN! THESE  
LIMEYS JUST DON'T  
APPRECIATE  
ME!

PERHAPS  
YOU JOINED  
THE WRONG  
SIDE, HERR  
BEAUMONT!



THE GERMAN OFFICER SMILED...

BUT TELL ME  
ABOUT SOME OF YOUR  
BATTLES. I'M MOST  
INTERESTED.

WHAT I  
DON'T KNOW  
ABOUT THIS WAR  
ISN'T WORTH  
KNOWING!

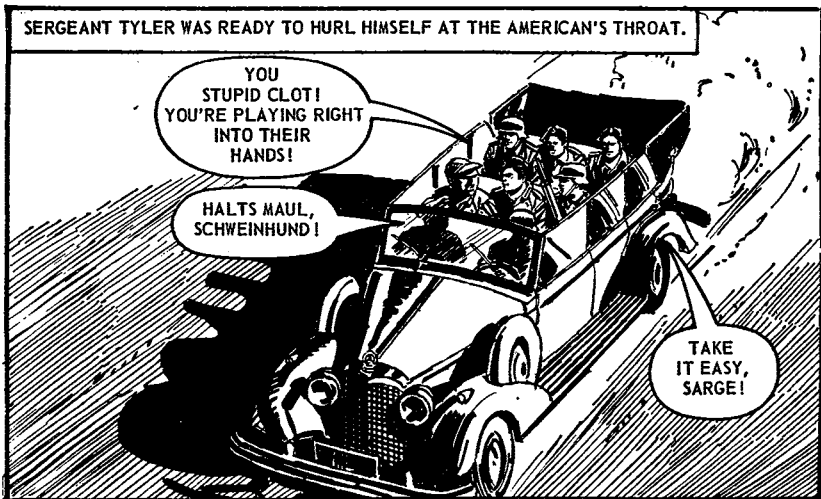


SERGEANT TYLER WAS READY TO HURL HIMSELF AT THE AMERICAN'S THROAT.

YOU  
STUPID CLOT!  
YOU'RE PLAYING RIGHT  
INTO THEIR  
HANDS!

HALTS MAUL,  
SCHWEINHUND!

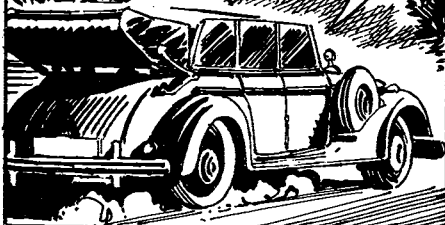
TAKE  
IT EASY,  
SARGE!



THE BIG GERMAN CAR ROARED ON ...

YES, SIREE,  
NOTHING I DON'T  
KNOW ABOUT BATTLES  
WE'VE FOUGHT AND  
BATTLES WE'RE  
GOING TO  
FIGHT!

EXCELLENT,  
HERR BEAUMONT,  
NO DOUBT YOU WILL  
BE ABLE TO  
TELL OUR S.S. WHAT  
THE ALLIES PLAN  
TO DO NEXT!



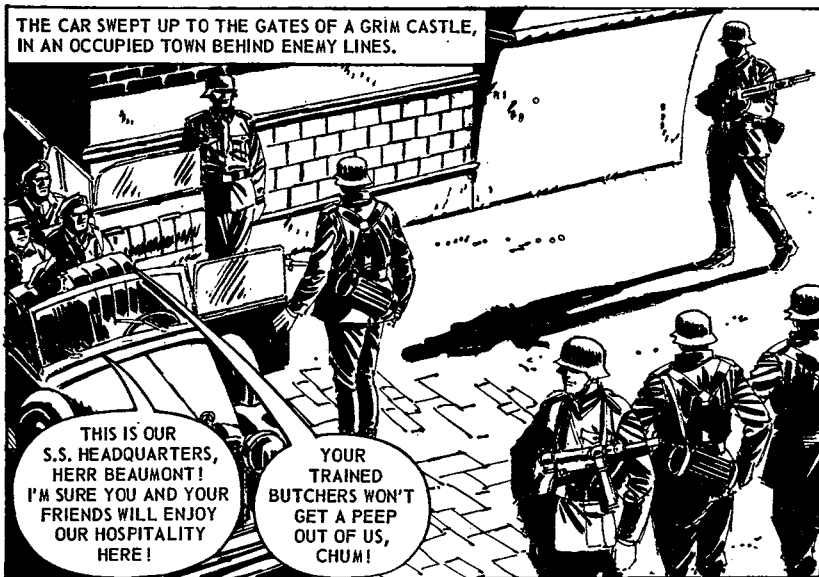
AT THAT, BEAUMONT SWALLOWED ...

DID  
YOU --  
SAY --  
S.S.?

JA! BUT YOU WILL NEED  
LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT  
TO TALK, HERR BEAUMONT!  
YOU ARE SO GOOD AT IT!



THE CAR SWEEPED UP TO THE GATES OF A GRIM CASTLE,  
IN AN OCCUPIED TOWN BEHIND ENEMY LINES.



THIS IS OUR  
S.S. HEADQUARTERS,  
HERR BEAUMONT!  
I'M SURE YOU AND YOUR  
FRIENDS WILL ENJOY  
OUR HOSPITALITY  
HERE!

YOUR  
TRAINED  
BUTCHERS WON'T  
GET A PEEP  
OUT OF US,  
CHUM!

THE HAUPTMANN'S FACE HAD TURNED COLD.

NOT FROM  
YOU, SERGEANT,  
BUT PERHAPS FROM  
YOUR AMERICAN  
FRIEND!

THE BUZZARD  
IS RIGHT! THE  
FAT YANK WILL SAY ANY-  
THING TO SAVE HIS  
OWN SKIN!



INSIDE,  
SCHWEIN!

WHEN  
THE LADS  
FROM THE  
BEACHES GET  
HERE, YOU  
WON'T BE SO  
TOUGH!



BUT INSIDE THE CELL, CHUCK BEAUMONT SOON REGAINED HIS SPIRITS...



BEAUMONT OPENED HIS TYPEWRITER AND BEGAN HAMMERING THE KEYS.

THIS REMINDS ME OF THE TIME IN  
SICILY WHEN THE LOCAL MAYOR  
THREW ME IN JAIL  
AS A SPY...

A BLOOMIN'  
PITY THEY EVER  
FOUND THE KEY,  
BEAUMONT!

SHUT UP,  
THE LOT OF  
YOU, THERE'S  
A GUARD  
COMING!



THE HEAVY DOOR GROUND OPEN.

THE COLONEL  
WANTS THE FAT ONE,  
SCHNELL!

THEY  
DIDN'T WASTE  
ANY TIME!

SERGEANT TYLER YELLED AFTER THE  
AMERICAN.

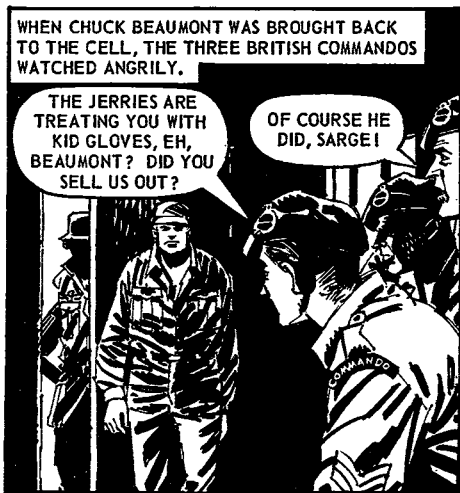
IF YOU TALK, YANK,  
I'LL WRING YOUR PERISHING  
NECK MYSELF!

BEAUMONT WAS LED INTO THE OFFICE OF COLONEL WEISMANN.

AH, HERR  
BEAUMONT, I AM  
HONOURED! PLEASE  
SIT DOWN!

YOU'RE -  
HONOURED...?





SERGEANT TYLER CLENCHED ONE HUGE FIST.

BY HECK, I  
OUGHT TO WIPE  
THAT SMIRK OFF  
YOUR FACE!



BUT IN THE OFFICE OF S.S. COLONEL  
WEISMANN AT THAT MOMENT...

JA! I  
HAVE INFORMATION  
THAT THE NORMANDY  
INVASION IS A FEINT!  
THE MAIN ATTACK  
WILL COME AT  
CALAIS!



WHILE THE ALLIES FOUGHT INLAND FROM THE BEACHES, ENEMY TANKS WERE HELD BACK...



AND AS THE ALLIES PUSHED INLAND, THE GERMAN PANZERS THAT COULD HAVE HURLED BACK THEIR ATTACK, WERE WAITING ELSEWHERE...



IN THE CELL, CHUCK BEAUMONT LAY ON HIS BUNK, WHITTILING AT A PIECE OF WOOD HE HAD FOUND...

HEY! WHERE'D YOU GET THAT KNIFE, BEAUMONT?

I 'BORROWED' IT FROM COLONEL WEISMANN, SERGEANT - JUST SO I COULD DO SOME WHITTLIN'...

THE FACES OF THE THREE COMMANDOS HARDENED...

WHITTILING!  
WE'RE STUCK IN A  
JERRY PRISON AND THE  
YANKEE BAG O' LARD  
PLAYS GAMES!

NIGHT FELL. DOZING ON HIS BUNK, CHUCK BEAUMONT SEEMED BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF THE DARK FIGURES GATHERED MENACINGLY AROUND HIM...



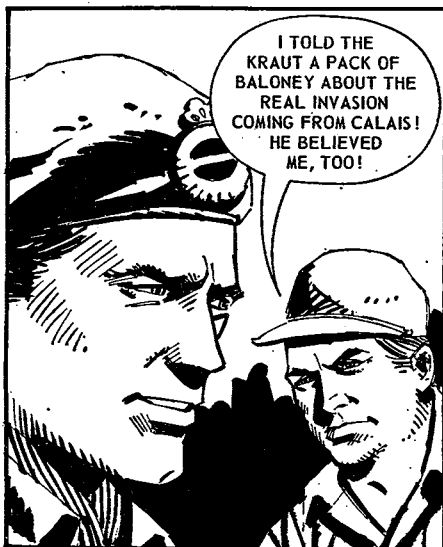
CORPORAL SMITH SEIZED BEAUMONT'S TYPEWRITER.



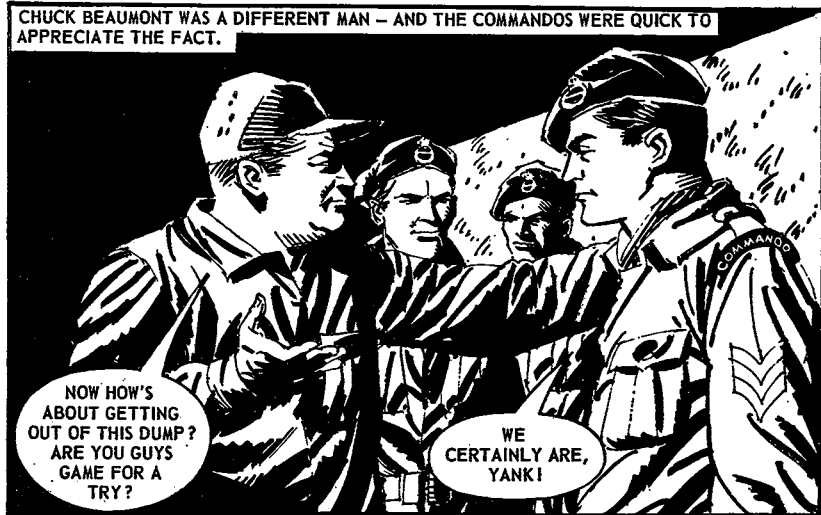
THEN BEAUMONT MOVED - LIKE A STRIKING SNAKE!







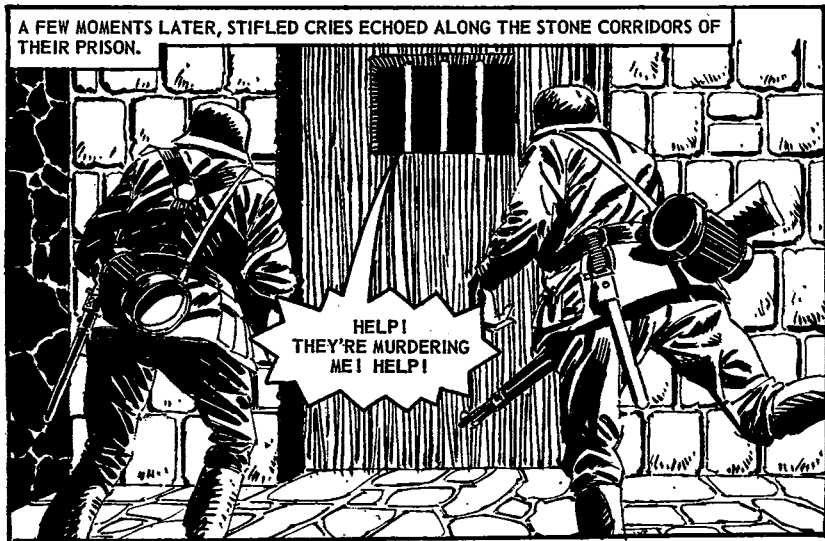
CHUCK BEAUMONT WAS A DIFFERENT MAN - AND THE COMMANDOS WERE QUICK TO APPRECIATE THE FACT.



BEAUMONT'S GRIN FLASHED.



A FEW MOMENTS LATER, STIFLED CRIES ECHOED ALONG THE STONE CORRIDORS OF THEIR PRISON.



THE GUARDS BURST INTO THE CELL...



BUT THEN...



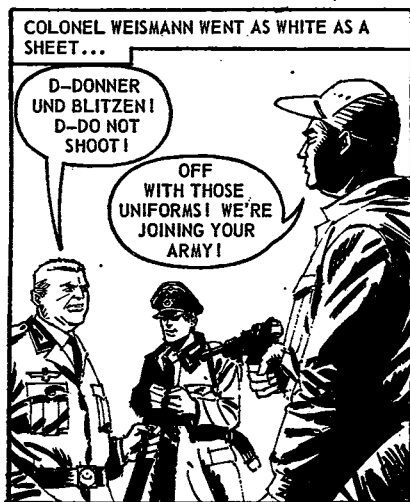
CHUCK BEAUMONT AND SERGEANT TYLER, ESCORTED BY TWO GREY UNIFORMED FIGURES, CLUMPED INTO COLONEL WEISMANN'S OFFICE.



COLONEL WEISMANN TURNED ANGRILY ON THE ESCORT...

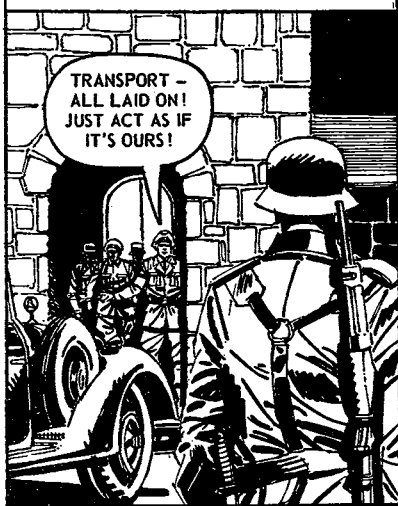


COLONEL WEISMANN WENT AS WHITE AS A SHEET...





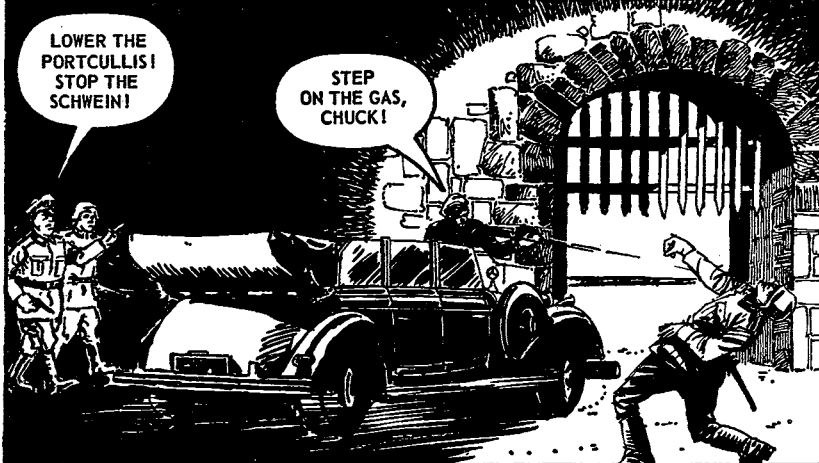
NERVING THEMSELVES, THEY STEPPED OUT INTO THE COBBLED YARD OF THE CASTLE..



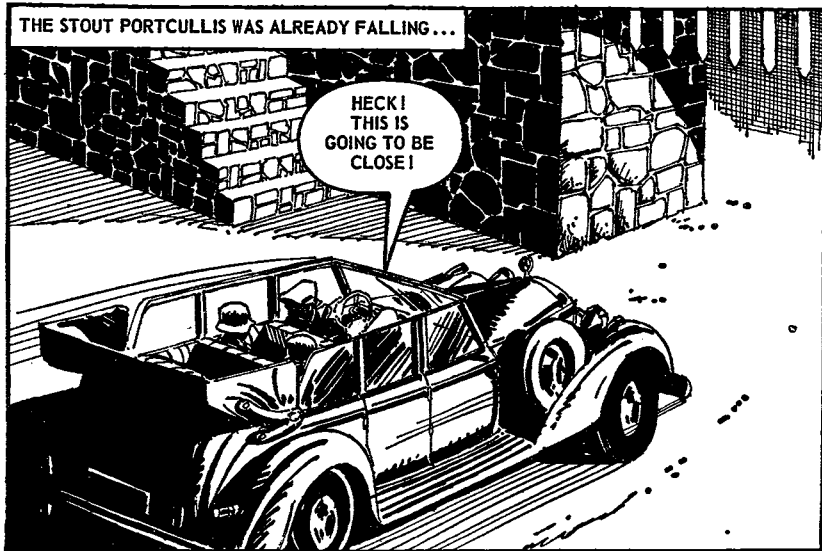
BUT AS THEY CLIMBED INTO THE BIG STAFF CAR...



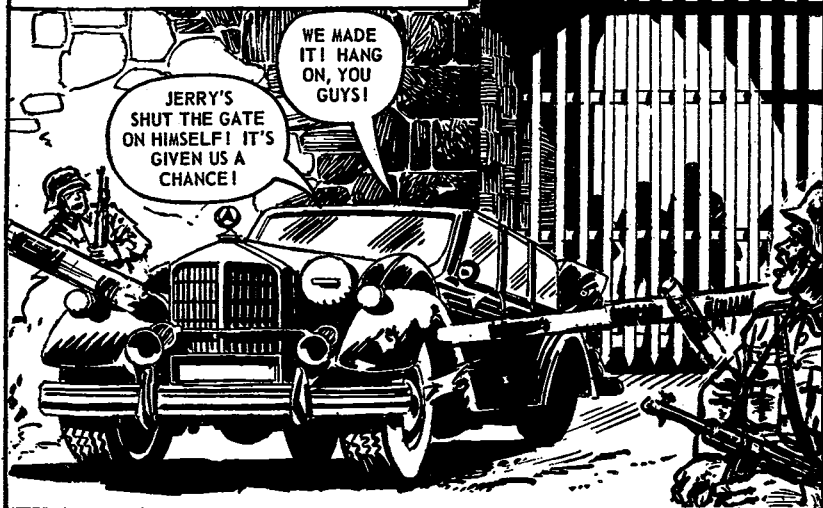
A SNAPPED SHOT FROM SERGEANT TYLER CUT DOWN THE NEAREST GERMAN...



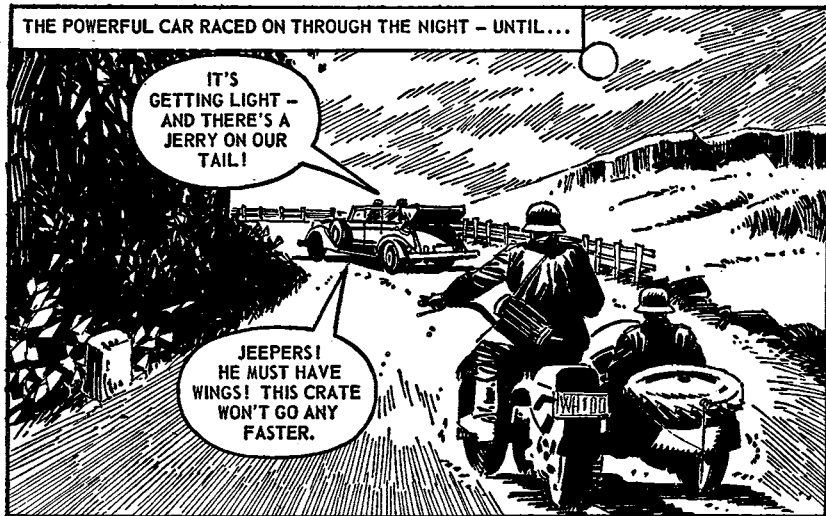
THE STOUT PORTCULLIS WAS ALREADY FALLING...



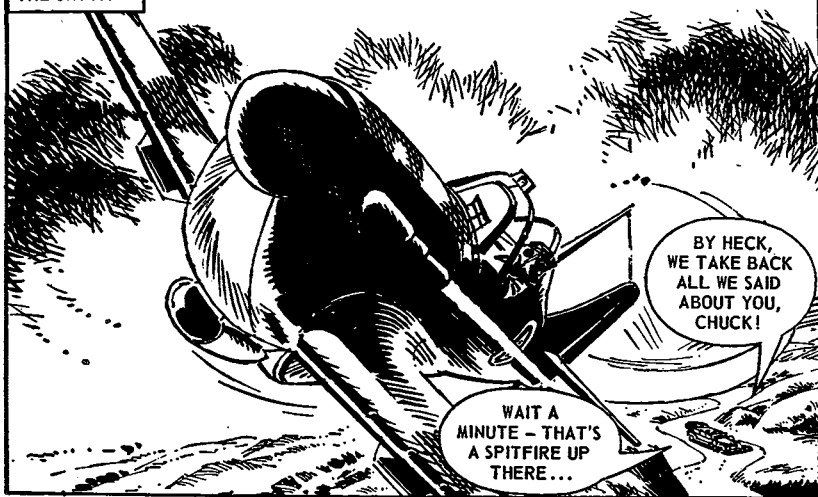
THEY STORMED THROUGH WITH INCHES TO SPARE ...



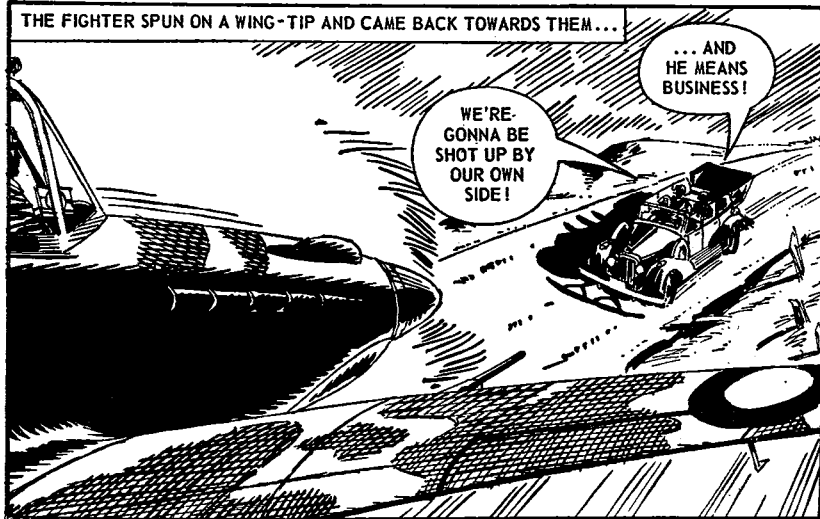
THE POWERFUL CAR RACED ON THROUGH THE NIGHT - UNTIL ...



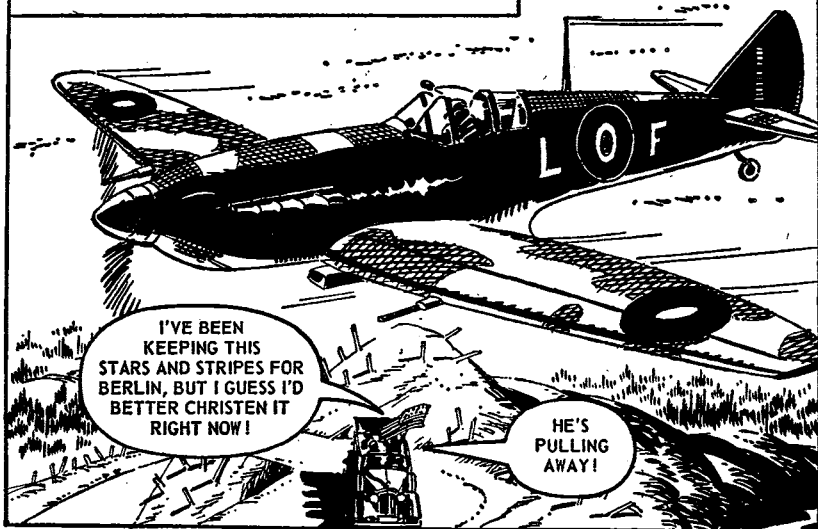
THE DANGER ON THEIR TAIL HAD DISAPPEARED – BUT A NEW MENACE ZOOMED OUT OF THE SKY ...



THE FIGHTER SPUN ON A WING-TIP AND CAME BACK TOWARDS THEM...



BUT ONCE AGAIN, CHUCK BEAUMONT HAD THE ANSWER...



A FEW MILES FARTHER ON, THEY FOUND THEMSELVES AMONG FRIENDLY AMERICAN FACES.



AS BEAUMONT WAS SURROUNDED BY HIS JUBILANT COUNTRYMEN, HE HAD A CONFESSION TO MAKE TO THE COMMANDOS.

FELLAS, I OWE YOU  
AN APOLOGY. I MADE  
MYSELF OUT A REAL BIG-  
MOUTH JUST TO GET YOUR  
BACKS UP! Y'SEE, I WANTED  
TO GO ON THAT RAID  
WITH YOU!

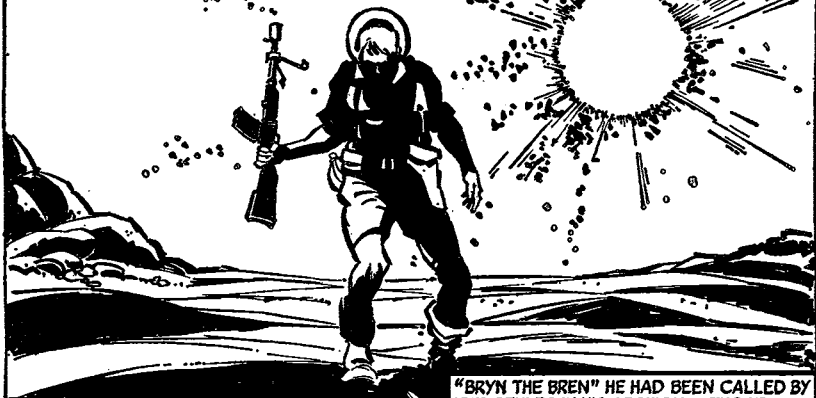


THE COMMANDOS WERE IN THE LAST BIG PUSHES OF THE WAR IN EUROPE WHEN HITLER'S REIGN WAS NEARING ITS END. BUT THEY DID NOT FORGET CHUCK BEAUMONT - NOR HE THEM...



# The VULTURES

HOW LONG...HOW FAR HAD HE BEEN WALKING?  
PRIVATE BRYN EVANS WAS PAST KNOWING OR CARING.

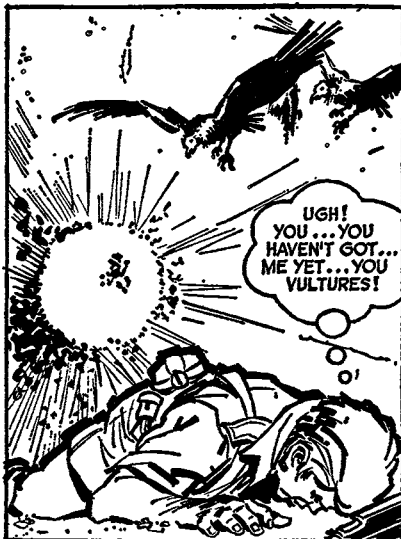


"BRYN THE BREN" HE HAD BEEN CALLED BY  
THE OTHERS IN HIS SECTION...THOSE  
OTHERS WHO NOW LAY DEAD ON THE  
SAND WAY BACK SOMEWHERE...



BUT A STUBBORN, GRITTY STREAK IN  
THE WELSHMAN'S CHARACTER KEPT  
HIM GOING, DESPITE HEAT, HUNGER  
AND THIRST.





ALL THOSE WEARY, SWEAT-SOAKED MILES HE  
HAD LUGGED THE BREN GUN AND NOW HE  
USED IT TO LEVER HIMSELF TO HIS FEET...



THROUGH GLAZED, BLOOD-STREAKED  
EYES, HE GLARED DEFIANTLY UPWARDS...

WAITING FOR ME  
TO DIE, EH? I'LL...  
I'LL DO FOR  
YOU FIRST.



SOMEHOW, HE BROUGHT HIS BELOVED BREN UP TO HIS HIP... AND SAVAGELY TRIGGERED A BURST SKYWARDS...



A MONSTROUS SHADOW, LARGER THAN ANY OF THE OTHERS, SWOOPED ON SILENT WINGS OVER HIS HEAD...



NO SHORT BURST, THIS TIME. BRYN EMPTIED THE MAGAZINE INTO THAT OMINOUS WINGED SHAPE...



... AND USED THE LAST DRESS OF HIS STUBBORN STRENGTH DOING IT.

TWO MILES AWAY, AT A LONELY DESERT FUEL DUMP, THE SERGEANT OF THE GUARD PRICKED UP HIS EARS...

FIRING... OVER  
TO THE WEST. A BREN,  
FROM THE SOUND OF  
IT! CALL THE DUTY  
PATROL!



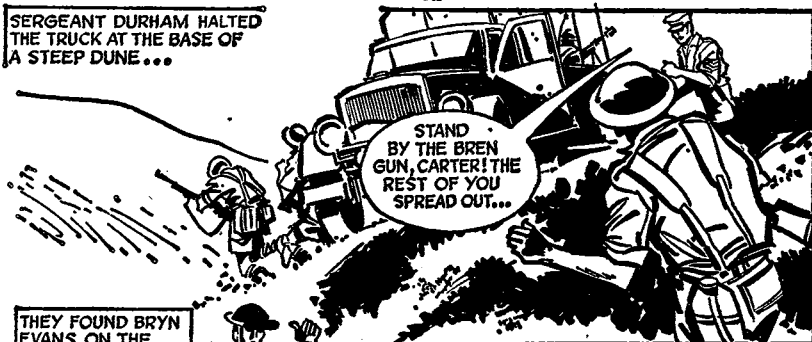
THE DUTY TRUCK DROVE WESTWARD, THE MEN IN IT  
PEERING INTO THE SHIMMERING HEAT HAZE...

NO MORE  
FIRING, SARGE!  
WHAT D'YOU  
RECKON...?

I'LL TELL  
YOU WHEN WE  
FIND OUT. LOOK! THERE  
ARE SOME BUZZARDS  
FLAPPING AROUND OVER  
THERE... HEAD THAT  
WAY...



SERGEANT DURHAM HALTED  
THE TRUCK AT THE BASE OF  
A STEEP DUNE...



THEY FOUND BRYN  
EVANS ON THE  
REVERSE SIDE OF  
THE SANDY SLOPE.



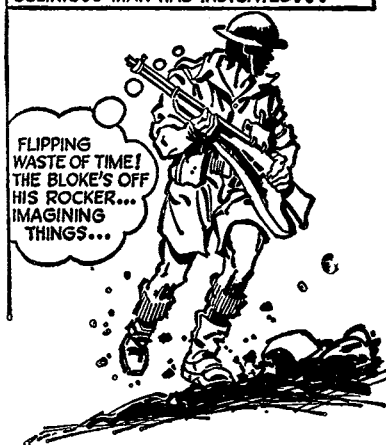
THE SERGEANT KNELT  
BESIDE THE WELSHMAN  
AND HELD A WATER-BOTTLE  
TO HIS BLACKENED LIPS...



STILL CLOSE TO DELIRIUM, BRYN EVANS  
COULD ONLY BABBLE OF VULTURES...



CHALKY SHRUGGED RESIGNEDLY AND  
TRUDGED IN THE DIRECTION THE  
DELIRIOUS MAN HAD INDICATED...



AND THEN CHALKY WHITE STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS  
...AND GAVE A HOARSE SHOUT OF ASTONISHMENT...



THERE, IN THE HOLLOW OF A DUNE, LAY A NIGHTMARE  
TANGLE OF TWISTED, SPLINTERED WRECKAGE...

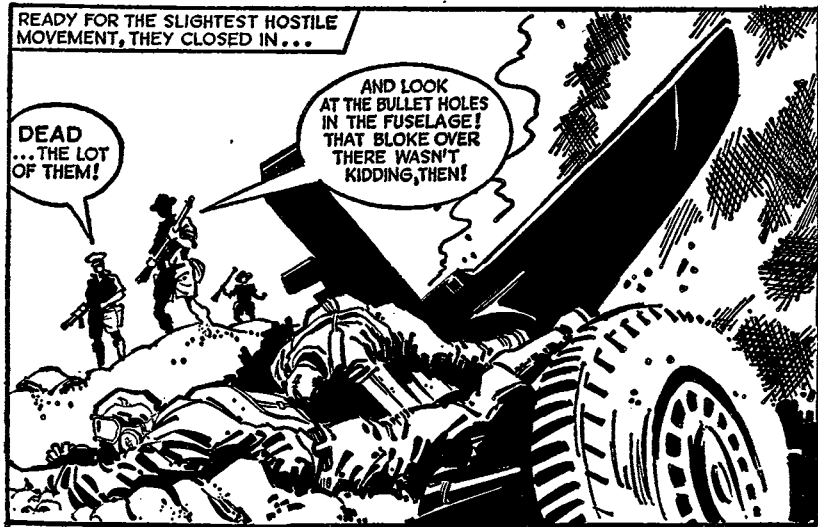
STONE THE  
CROWS! A  
JERRY  
GLIDER!



READY FOR THE SLIGHTEST HOSTILE  
MOVEMENT, THEY CLOSED IN...

DEAD  
...THE LOT  
OF THEM!

AND LOOK  
AT THE BULLET HOLES  
IN THE FUSELAGE!  
THAT BLOKE OVER  
THERE WASN'T  
KIDDING, THEN!



A CLOSER INSPECTION OF THE BODIES DISCLOSED A MAP, CLUTCHED IN THE STIFFENING HAND OF A DEAD GERMAN OFFICER.



YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS! THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO RAID THE DUMP!



THEY RETURNED TO WHERE THEY HAD LEFT BRYN EVANS...



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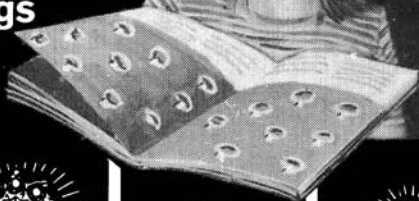
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